

Local union president calls agreement 'good deal'

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in years past. The contract, at one point, got hung up on one primary concern centering on the issue of staffing. She refused to provide details.

Ms Beckett-Morton acknowledged the ministry's deadline certainly pushed both sides to come to an agreement, but the fact a contract is signed showed the board and union wanted a deal done.

"We knew we had to put a contract together," she said. "We both had an interest in coming to an agreement. I think we will be pleased with the outcome. I think it reflects the framework. I think

we're quite happy with it."

And the fact it protects needed funding is positive news, Ms Beckett-Morton said.

"I think we needed to have this agreement because we need the additional staff, which is wonderful for kids, and to generally have stability in the system for the next three years is great."

Maureen Weinberger, local ETFO president, said the union is "very pleased" and "very relieved" at the tentative agreement. She said the union was successful in resolving some of the working conditions issues that had been lingering concerns for the last few years.

"We think this is going to be a good deal for our members for years to come," she said, noting members remained committed to the sanctions. "We got down to some things that were really important to both sides. It took us a long time to find some common ground on that."

"I think we walked away feeling we had resolved it in a way that respects the concerns we have, and we hope the board feels the same way."

Ms Weinberger said she wasn't aware of any major cancellations at schools resulting from the sanctions.

Board Chair Paul Tate said the deal, if ratified, would provide labour stability.

"We're thrilled, obviously. It's good for the teachers and it's good for the board. We can go on now for three years without any concerns."

Asked if there might be fallout because the contract took a while to be reached, Mr. Tate said he doesn't fear that happening.

"I think throughout the experience both teams were very cordial," he said. "People come to negotiations with differences, but these differences weren't that great, really. It took some time."

"I think we have good relationships with the teachers."

Oakville Trustee Mary Chapin was relieved a tentative deal was reached.

"I'm delighted that it's finally settled. I'm sorry it has taken so long. Now we can get back to doing what the school system is supposed to be doing."

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Judge orders trial in man's murder

A judge has ordered two men to stand trial for first-degree murder in last June's brutal death of a Milton man.

Michael James McDonough, 39, and Mississauga's John Kevin McClatchey, 47, appeared before Judge Theo Wolder yesterday morning at Ontario Court of Justice in Milton for the decision.

Brian Stockton, 48, was found dead in a flaming car June 17 last year behind

Traffic transport company on Regional Road 25, north of Hwy. 401.

Judge Wolder re-iterated the theories presented by the defence and Crown during the preliminary hearing, but the evidence is under a publication ban.

A preliminary hearing is held to determine if there's sufficient evidence for a case to go to trial.

The judge spoke to both of the accused

separately, since Mr. McDonough arrived at the court from custody after Mr. McClatchey. Both appeared unfazed as the judge read his decision. Mr. McDonough, wearing an orange prison-issued jumpsuit, looked straight ahead, as did the older, grey-haired Mr. McClatchey.

Both of the accused will appear at Superior Court of Justice in Milton July 4 to set a trial date.

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